

HOT • ISSUES



Hats off to YOU!

This issue is dedicated to the readers of *Hot Issues*.

In the last edition, State Fire Marshal Nancy Orr issued a call to action to help raise concerns about novelty lighters and children with the Consumer Products Safety Commission. Your response has been incredible. We'll update you with what's been done to date.

A year ago we asked for reports of fire incidents involving Axe deodorant. In this edition, we'll share what we've learned so far.

Together, we are helping to accomplish great things!

Novelty lighter campaign

People across the country responded to our call to action. Here is what some of them told us.

Letters were sent to CPSC:

- FirePsych, Inc., Robert Stadolnik, Ed.D.
- National Fire Protection Association, President James M. Shannon
- Texas State Fire Marshal Paul W. Maldonado
- Western Fire Chiefs Association, President Jeff Johnson

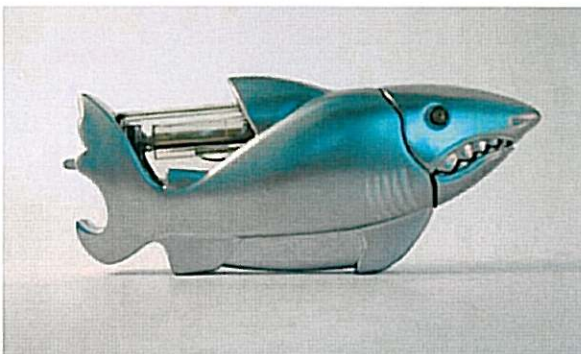
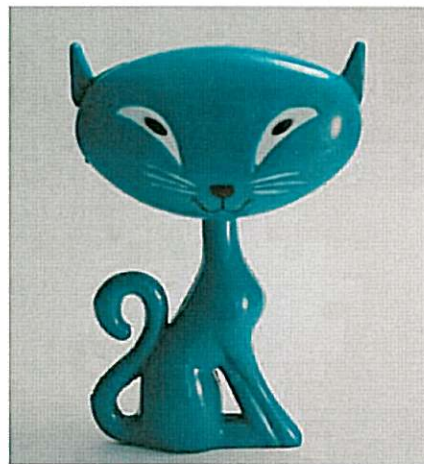
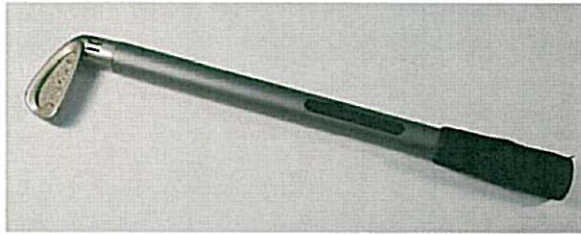
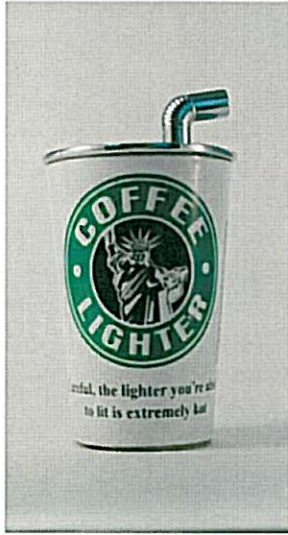
Fire departments raised the issue in the local media:

- Deputy Chief Gary Blumreich, Rhinelander Fire Department, Rhinelander, Wisconsin, shared an article in *The Rhinelander Daily News*.
- Captain Mark Northrup, Rogue River Fire District, Rogue River, Oregon, sent a full color spread that appeared in the *Rogue River Press*.
- The Burn Institute, San Diego, California, raised the issue in a front page spread in the winter 2006 *Burn Institute Beacon*.
- Volunteer Firefighters Insurance Services, a division of Glatfelter Insurance Group, will publish an article in their newsletter. The information will reach 20,000 of their members who will be encouraged to contact CPSC and ask that novelty lighters be banned in the U.S.

Other:

- USFA is supporting the campaign and has asked fire departments and burn centers to send data to the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal.
- Jack Carriger reported that the National Volunteer Fire Council passed a resolution encouraging CPSC to prohibit the sale of novelty lighters.
- A therapist in a Denver, Colorado, Children's Hospital juvenile firesetter therapy group reported that firesetting youths identify novelty lighters as toys for kids.
- CEO Richard Lambert of The Idea Bank, producer of educational videos, is making a PSA about novelty lighters.
- Deputy Fire Marshal J. Arthur Miller, Harrisonburg Fire Department, Harrisonburg, Virginia, reported that they mounted a Fire Prevention Week informational display about the hazards of novelty lighters. Also, their legislator introduced a bill to regulate the sale or purchase of them. (details on page 3)
- Deborah Johnson, Community-based Prevention and Outreach, Texas State Fire Marshal, reported they are changing their fire reporting form to facilitate the collection of information about novelty lighters.

New on Oregon shelves



Novelty lighter bill

introduced in the Virginia legislature

Ed. note: DFM J. Arthur Miller, Harrisonburg Fire Department, Harrisonburg, Virginia, wrote to share information with *Hot Issues* about the bill regulating novelty lighters introduced in Virginia last year.

Congratulations on a good effort, DFM Miller. Thanks for sharing with *Hot Issues*. We can learn from each other.

Dear Colleagues,

I read Ms. Orr's letter to the CPSC regarding novelty lighters. I would like to pass along an item of interest that we initiated with our House of Delegates representative, Delegate Matt Lohr.

He met with us at our Fire Prevention Week display in the fall of 2005 during his campaign. We had on display several dozen novelty lighters. We were attempting to impress upon the public the problem that we alike see.

I have attached a copy of a bill that he plans to introduce in the Virginia General Assembly. Through your contacts, you may well become familiar with this bill. I will also keep you apprised of the bill's progress.

Sincerely,

J. Arthur Miller
CFPS Deputy Fire Marshal
540-432-7746
www.HarrisonburgFire.org

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia ...

SUMMARY

Sale or purchase of novelty cigarette lighters; civil penalty. Provides that any person who sells to, distributes to, purchases for or knowingly permits the purchase by any person less than 16 years of age, knowing or having reason to believe that such person is less than 16 years of age, any cigarette lighter that is not readily identifiable as such, is punishable by a civil penalty of no more than \$100 and that any person less than 16 years of age who attempts to purchase a cigarette lighter that is not readily identifiable as such is likewise punishable by a civil penalty of no more than \$100.

Ed. note: Lt. Wanda Willis, Harrisonburg Fire Department, Harrisonburg, Virginia, sent an update on the fate of their novelty lighter bill. While its passage was unsuccessful this time, they intend to try again.

Commonwealth of Virginia regarding an update on the Virginia Novelty Lighter Proposed Bill:

Members of the Militia, Police and Public Safety subcommittee failed to pass House Bill Number 1728, The Novelty Lighter Bill.

The subcommittee members were sympathetic to the issue, but unfortunately they had concerns with the wording of the bill. As I understand them, they believe it will be difficult for retail merchants to determine what constitutes a "novelty lighter." Everyone at the meeting seemed to have concerns with the lighters so we will definitely work with our delegate to present a bill at next year's Virginia General Assembly.

Please keep me informed on any issues you have with lighters as we are already planning how to approach this for next year. This was a learning process for us at the Harrisonburg Fire Department and we hope to go back next year armed with more information and a stronger bill. The remarks from the subcommittee members as well as a convenience store representative suggested that wording of the bill should include placement of lighters in the stores.

We appreciate the work that Delegate Matt Lohr and his aide, Audrey Berkshire, have given to the fire department by bringing the issue of novelty lighters to the forefront of the Virginia General Assembly.

Lt. Wanda Willis
Fire Prevention Education Specialist
540-432-7717
wandaw@ci.harrisonburg.va.us

The European Union has taken action

Ed. note: The following is excerpted from The European Commission Web site, section on Health and Consumer Protection.
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On 11 May 2006, the Commission adopted a Decision requiring Member States to ensure that, from 11 March 2007, cigarette lighters are child-resistant when placed on the EU market. The Decision also prohibits placing on the market of lighters which resemble objects that are particularly attractive to children; so-called Novelty Lighters. Certain lighters, such as luxury lighters, are excluded from the scope of the Decision based on a number of technical criteria, but must anyway comply with the general safety requirements for these products ...
... by the appearance of the products their intended use (as a lighter) is not obvious and they can be considered as novelty lighters. According to the European Standard a lighter shall not be novelty-like, because the inherent risk is significantly higher. The novelty lighters are attractive for children and taking into account children's normal behaviour risk of burning injury is present during their use. (Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General of the EU) ...

... In short this means that by 11 March 2007:

All lighters must be safe

(This has already been the case since 1992. Lighters which comply with all requirements of ISO9994 are presumed to be safe)

Lighters are products which are inherently hazardous since they produce a flame or heat and since they contain a flammable fuel. They pose a serious risk when being misused by children, which may result in fires, injuries or even deaths. Taking account of the inherently hazardous nature of lighters, the very high number of items placed on the market and the foreseeable conditions of use, the seriousness of the risk posed by lighters to children's safety should be dealt with in relation to their possible use in play by children. (from the Commission Decision, 11 May 2006)

Cigarette lighters placed on the EU market must be child-resistant

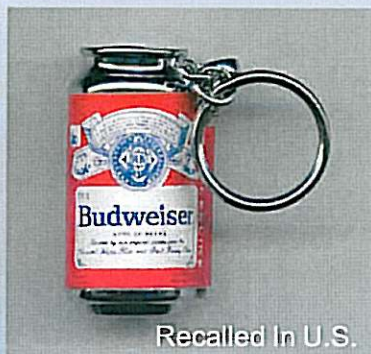
(with the exception of lighters which are sold with a 2 year written guarantee, are refillable and can be repaired by a European-based after-sales service)

The serious risk posed by lighters is confirmed by the available data and information on fires in the EU related to children playing with lighters. A report published by the United Kingdom Department of Trade and Industry in February 1997 entitled "European research—accidents caused by children under five playing with cigarette lighters and matches" estimated a total of about 1,200 fires, 260 injuries and 20 deaths per year in the EU for 1997. More recent information confirms that a significant number of serious accidents, including deaths, are still caused in the EU by children playing with non-resistant lighters. (from the Commission Decision, 11 May 2006)

Novelty lighters are banned

All lighters that resemble by any means to another object recognized as appealing to or intended for use by children should be banned. This includes, but is not limited to, lighters the shape of which resembles cartoon characters, toys, guns, watches, telephones, musical instruments, vehicles, human body or parts of the human body, animals, food or beverages, or that play musical notes, or have flashing lights or moving objects or other entertaining features, usually called 'novelty lighters,' which pose a high risk of misuse by children. (from the Commission Decision, 11 May 2006)

*Ed. note: The European Commission Web site has extensive information about the Decision and is well worth a look.
http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_safe/prod_safe/gpsd/lighters/index_en.htm*



Recalled In U.S.



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